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Subject: Mao's Opposition

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[REDACTED] Prepared for internal use as a guide to the operational environment, this commentary is disseminated in the belief that it may be useful to other agencies in assessing the situation for their own purposes.

SUMMARY: Mao's opposition is widespread and continuing. It is characterized by the Party as "more insidious and cunning" than any previous anti-party clique. The opposition is found in artists of all types, Politburo members, Party senior propagandists, military personnel and university presidents. However, functional non-political offices, such as Party Economic and Foreign Affairs Departments seem to be outside the purge. As Mao again attempts to force his Party and his people to accept the discipline of Maoism, the effort may be too much for both and the Chinese may quietly walk away from his leadership.

As the purge widens throughout China there is need to examine just who has been caught opposing today's Roi Soleil. It is certainly a mixed bag -- historians, playwrights, movie directors, Politburo members, virtually all of the Party's senior propagandists, military personalities and university presidents. Mao and Lin have recognized the universality of the opposition, indeed, have perhaps created it in part. So many are involved that one wonders at first just who remains loyal and who is pressing the attack against the bourgeois royalists, the revisionists, and all the members of the black gang of the three-family village and the four-family store.

Certain vital Communist Party entities have as yet been above reproach: the public security apparatus, the Communist Party staff offices of Agriculture and Forestry, Finance and Trade, Industry and Communications, as well as Foreign Affairs -- all appear to have escaped open criticism. It almost seems that the functional non-political offices are outside the purge and that those under censure are the offices which are involved in the ideology of Communism and the extension of Communist Party control.

The party now characterizes its opposition as "more insidious and cunning than the two previous anti-party cliques which have been crushed." These are

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the men who "reached out to grab at power in the party, the Army, and the government to usurp the leadership so as to restore capitalism." These charges are extremely serious; the problem lies in whether they are genuine or false. In the past the Communists have been pretty literal and we would guess that these charges should be taken seriously as a clear reflection of the intentions of the opposition.

Assuming these charges are in earnest we must answer another question: To whom do they specifically apply?

There has been an opposition faction in China since the Communist assumption of power in 1949. After Mao embarked on the communes and the Great Leap Forward and these two efforts failed badly, criticism grew to a high point in 1962. From 1959 to 1962, by Mao's own admission, the "heavy national calamities and the sabotage of the Soviet revisionists" so weakened China that a major purge to contain this criticism was not possible. Actually this is partly an excuse, since Mao forced the demarche with the Soviets leading to the removal of the technicians; still, there can be no doubt that the Soviet departure hurt China. The intellectuals now under heavy attack did use this period of party weakness to advance ideas which, when read, literally refuted Maoism. This is why Wu Han and Teng T'o were able to print their satires and why the party did not act against them.

In late 1962 Mao felt strong enough to begin the rectification he knew was necessary -- the socialist education campaign. This developed throughout 1963 and led to the direct attack on Yang Hsien Chen, the leading theoretician of the higher party school, whose dialectic arguments directly opposed those of Mao and were applied by the opposition to buttress agreements for private plots, free markets, and increase in small enterprises. All of this was anathema to Mao, but not necessarily to a number of party leaders who were beginning to move away from Mao's leadership and his theories. As senior party members defied Mao, many lesser individuals used this shelter to produce anti-Maoist novels, essays and motion pictures.

By 1965 the rectification movement was faltering badly. The socialist education movement was by then being carried forward in the nationwide four clearances effort. Probably no disciplinary movement of the party was so thoroughly honored in the breach as the four clearances. By the fall of 1965 the party was no longer in direct control of the people. The opposition within the party had continued to mature and Mao found it necessary to begin a broad attack on his critics in November 1965. The first battle of the socialist cultural revolution took place in Shanghai when the municipal committee denounced the historian Wu Han and the fight with the Peking

Municipal Committee began.

Therefore, we can answer our question. The opposition lay in the leadership of the Peking Municipal Committee, P'eng Chen and his subordinates, the propaganda department of the party, which allowed the development of the intellectual opposition, and the many party members who felt that the relaxation of Maoist Doctrine presaged a more adaptable Communism. This opposition is not dead despite the three months socialist cultural revolution purge. Mao is attempting a cleansing of the entire country of such anti-Maoist thought. He has not abandoned his intent to lead world Communism, but he realizes he must fully re-establish Maoism in China and regain control of the drifting party apparatus.

It is doubtful that a dynasty built on the sand of Maoist philosophy will take a century to fall; once begun, a decade would seem too long. The great socialist cultural revolution now unmasks "freaks and monsters" each week. As the list of purges grows, it is a reasonable speculation that there will be more. Mao is worried about his revolution for it is clearly failing. If there is, medically, a disease definable as political paranoia, it has settled on the sometime resident of the small but now unlovely quarters overlooking Nan Hai, Peking's most exquisite lake. "Who knows whither the golden crane went, leaving but a shrine for pilgrims?" If there is any answer for the old man, it is also found in Chinese poetry -- "A cup of wine under the trees; I drink alone for no friend is near."